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ABSTRACT

This book, a project of the Montana Arts Council Poets and Writers in the School program, is a collection of poems written by students in elementary and secondary schools of Montana. In addition to the poems, the book contains an essay on motivating and guiding students to write creatively, a list of resources for creative-writing teachers, an index of contributors, and a list of participating schools. (JM)

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I'm sorry
I came
to school
without
telling you

I bet
you
think I am
at home
skipping school

But you are
wrong I am
in school
skipping school

Doug Davis
Browning Junior High School

MUSIC HAPPENS

Music happens
when life drags down on you
as you hang onto the edge of reality
music happens
man uses music
music uses man
happiness happens when people make music
man makes music
music makes man
loneliness creates music more than the life itself
music happens
use it

Tom Puckett
Paris Gibson Junior High School
Great Falls

I FEEL LIKE TOUCHING SOMETHING THAT'S NOT THERE

POEMS BY STUDENTS IN ELEMENTARY
& SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF MONTANA

Montana Arts Council
Poets & Writers in the School Program
1975-1976

Edited by David Long

This book is a project of the Montana Arts Council Poets and Writers in Schools program, supported by the participating schools, the Montana Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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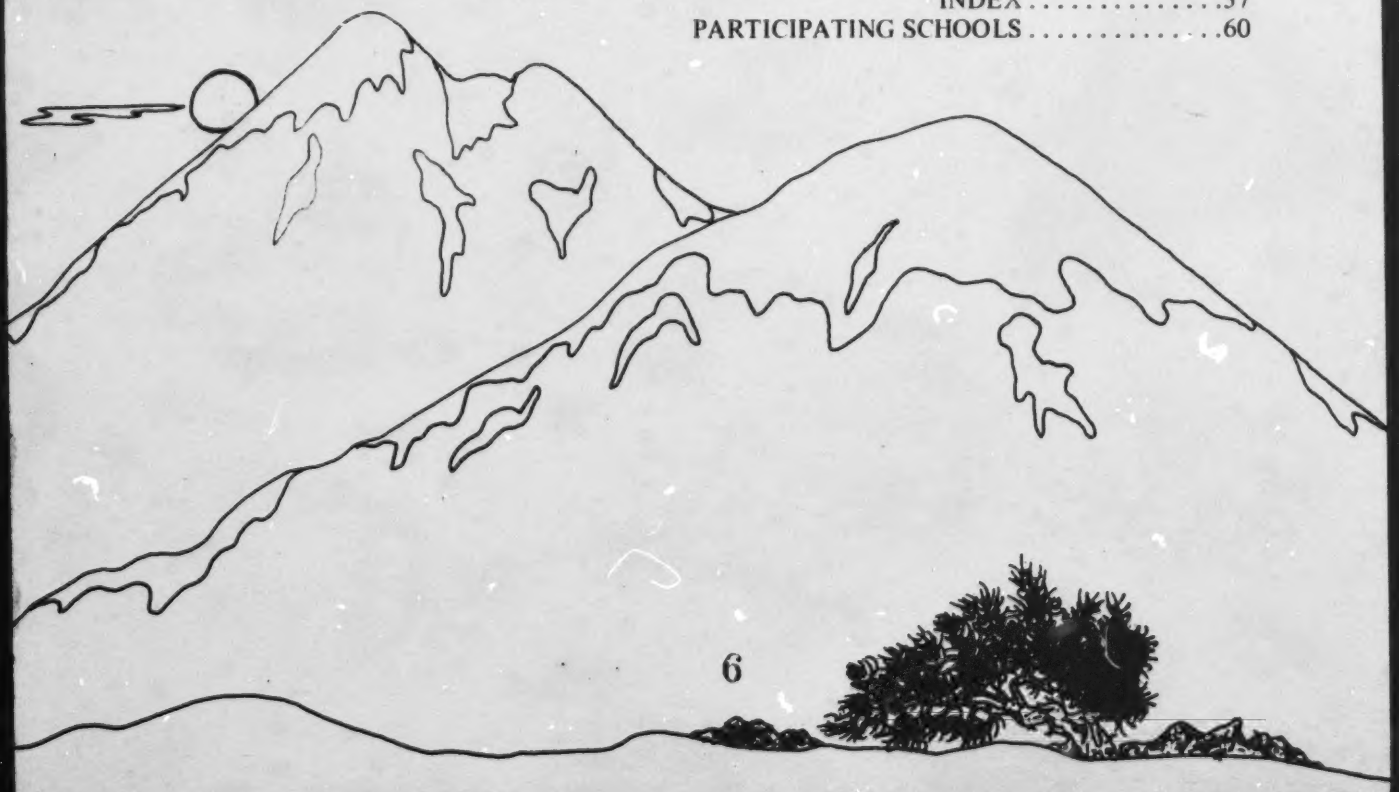


WHO ARE YOU?

i am the one who dances in the sunlight
i am the one who smiles at just the right time
i am the one who laughs at nothing
i am the one who will answer when you call
i am the one who will shine when you need me
i am the one who will kiss away the dew drops
i am the one who cries in the night
i am the one you will never know
i am the one who wants to ride the sky
i am the bumblebee at the bottom of the jar
i am cinderella when the clock strikes 12
i am the one who dreams of living

Amy Olson
Ronan High School

I SHOW YOU PICTURES IN THE NIGHT

I am a dream
I am nice when you are asleep
I show you pictures in the night
a roaring bear
a white horse guarding its mates
a black mouse in its hole
  sleeping on its side
a Welsh Corgi with its mate
I am never a bad dream
I never make you cry when you're asleep.

Belynda Metty
Garfield Elementary
Billings

Just don't go
Away
I will
Make you
Exciting.

Jaime
Garfield Elementary
Billings

COLD

I am the one who is wilting away
I am the one who is blocked up
I am the one who is a long tube
filled with bright red pain
I am the one who feels needles poking
at my brain
I am the one who talks with a strange voice.

Lorna Nagengast
Fort Benton Junior High School

I am a thermostat
I am so cold and lonely sometimes
until someone comes and turns me on
I grow warm, spreading comfort and
security until I run out of fuel and strength
I need someone

JoAnne S.
Ronan High School

I am my man
or I am my young man
or I am just my father's small boy
or I am my father's son.
I am my own supporter
or I am my spouse's supporter
or I am my spouse's partner.
I am my father's son.
I am my spouse's partner.
I am my own.

Hugh Hahn
Billings Senior High School

Take me for what I am.
Take me high,
take me to castles.
Take me low,
take me to cabins.
Take me for granted.
Take me for everything I've got.
Then take off.

Gary Walker
Sidney High School

I say one word then another
for the animals made up in my mind
are just showers of dreams.

The lights of the land are strong pictures
glaring at me.

Waiting for the crop of my imagination
to stumble from its daydream

Then only to become a sad serious show
of forking reality.

Tammie Sage
Franklin Elementary
Missoula

ME

I'm the one who can make you happy.
I'm the one who would sit by a brook and wonder.
I'm the one who would watch a fire.
I'm the boy who can make you wonder
as long as you can remember.
I'm the boy who can stop the bad
and come back with the the good.
I'm the one that likes to run and jump
and to be free with nothing to stop me.

Jim
Whittier Elementary
Bozeman

MY CHANT

I can't do what I don't know.
I can't make you see it if you don't want to see.
I can't make you get it if you don't want it.
I can't read it cause I don't want to read.
I can't do what I don't know.

Denise Stump
Rocky Boy Elementary

THE WEIRD WORLD OF MY BODY

I came home from school and
played my
ear drums
but my mother got mad
at me for playing
so loud so
I went
and climbed in my chest
and fell asleep
then I woke
up and heard
my mother
tell me it was time to go to school.
On the way to school
I found an adams apple
and gave it to my
teacher. At recess
I was
bowling my eye balls
and after
I went in to the room
and saw a
pupil in my chair
after school I went
to sail with my
uncle
on his
blood vessel
and pounded finger nails in
to a nose bridge
for
my uncle.

When
I came home my toys
were all over the floor
so I
put all my toys
in my voice box
and went to
hunt
for a mole.

Padde Fleming
Willard Elementary
Missoula

MY JOINTS

My joints join in,
to spin and spin,
to help me bend my body.

Lori Stone
C. S. Porter Elementary
Missoula

I'm going to make Mary
give me her brain

And Jerry his height

And Amos his strength

And keep the way I look.

Carol Harp
Browning Junior High School

My waist is skinny and my head is big
I got a flinch in my eye
My bath is bumpy and I am square
My jokes are weird and so am I
I have no berries to pick but I do
have apples and plums
No one believes me except for
my family, friends and teachers
Whenever I pull a trigger I blow it
My silver buckles bring up a light
The magic penny is always mine

Brenda Frieling
Fort Benton Junior High School

MY HAIR

My hair is as straight as the stem on a tree.
It dances on my head.
It's as blonde as the sunset in the night.
My hair is so beautiful.
It looks like butterflies flying all around.
I love my hair.
I can put it in tails as long as my legs.
It whispers in my ears.

Tammy Towers
Emerson Elementary
Bozeman

MY HAND

My hand moves like the river deep.
My hand moves like a turtle.

My hand can feel a cat's soft fur.
My hand can feel your hard bald head.

My hand has veins
yellow blue and red. My hand has
veins like a crow's head. My hand's
veins yell like fire.

Deana Smith
Sunnyside Elementary
Great Falls

I look at the worlds
as they go drifting by.
I see the passing travelers
as they whisper through the sky.

Kingdoms rise
large and small,
I stay in my orbit
and watch them fall.

Steve Burnham
Corvallis High School

I live for everyday.
I live beyond the worn night.
I live in despair.
I live in joy.
I live while man dies inside.
I live when all else fails.
I live to make mistakes.
I live to face the facts.

I feel man's errors.
I feel my mistakes.
I feel the storm brewing.
I feel the pressure building.
I feel the heart's wanting.
I feel the cutting wind.
I feel your flesh.
I feel your need.
I feel the breaking of strengthened bonds.

Dan Hull
Lake High School
Medicine Lake

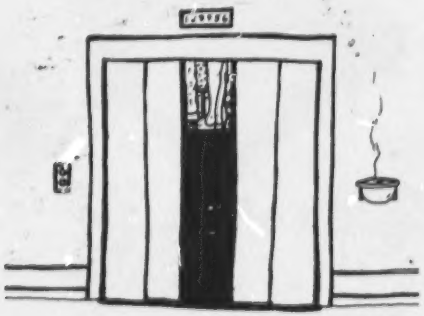
When I'm excited I get dangerous, nobody gets near me. When I go through the town everybody shuts their windows. Even when I go to buy something the storekeeper does the same thing. Even the police lock their doors and windows. Even the cows and horses lock their barns. Chickens too even faint and fall down. Even the whole gang is scared of me. They run away with their Hondas and cowboys ride their horses and go by me and they look like dummies.

Larry Big Hair
Pretty Eagle School

I AM

A snowflake falling from the deep blue sky.
A bird sitting in a tree.
A car zooming around town.
An old creeky rocking chair.
An old lion with somebody's hand running
through my mane.
A hot red sun but in the night.
I'm a moon.
An old stick that someone found.
An old bone that a dog is burying.

Wendy
Whittier Elementary
Bozeman



ELEVATOR

I am an elevator.
People make me laugh
when they press my buttons.

I am kept awake all night.
When I go down to floor one
twelve people or more get on

and it's hard
to push them all up to floor two.
People get free rides
and nobody says thank you.

Steve Merrifield
Garfield Elementary
Billings

I am water
I define pretty rocks under me
I am water
I freeze in winter
I am water
You can drink from me
I cool you in summer
I am water
Snow melts into me
I am water
I run down the mountain
I am water
I run through the rivers
I am water
In the ocean I am salt water
I am the water
Children wade in me
I am the water
The sun shines on me
I am the water
Clouds make rain fall into me
I am the water
Little snails climb through me
I am the water

Carol Drew
Roosevelt Elementary
Missoula

THE SUN AS A MAGNET

THE BEGINNING OF A NEW DAY

in the crab colored dawn
is a silver silk spider's web with tiny beads
of water dripping from it.
The sun is rising in different colors,
birds are churping.
The salty smell of hickory bacon is
coming over. The crickets are beginning
to play their wake up song.
A shiver goes down my back.

Colleen Paynich
Longfellow Elementary
Bozeman

FOREST

A whisper in the dusk, the gentle wind
began. A water buffalo is swimming
across the silent lake, ripples spread.
A feather slowly slides to the
ground. As the mellow hum of dusk
grows. I hear the gentle swish of
bushes, hush.

Nyss Ammons
Paxson Elementary
Missoula

Every night when the last rays
of the sun leave the blue sky
and disappear behind the purple mountains,
the stars slowly creep out to light up
the black sky.

The stars look as white as a dove's wing
against the black sky.
Everywhere you look there are groups
of stars, yet the sky is not crowded.

Tammy Leidholt
Kircher School
Custer County

THE GORGE

Things are calm here. The language
recommends rain. The sun as a magnet
draws us toward the highest
peak, to gather pine nuts. The wind
is blowing cones. I wonder.

Together living on cliffs opening into nothing.
Goshawk claws a flickertail.
The ground sponges blood
and we do not find the shadows of the black
bear before they find us.

The mustangs gallop, kicking dust
across the prairie. Newborns sandwiched
into the herd, leaders shield their young.
We search for more. Night is
coming on.

Always we are linked like chains.
The bandit raccoon roams across
green blades. Tumbleweeds fall
off the edge. We can remember
but never go back.

Loretta Bondeson
Project Laser
Flathead High School
Kalispell

SNOW

Fall snow fall over the withered trees.
Softly the snow falls over the sleeping town,
Over the green hills. Floating down
From the sky like little white parachutes.
Fall snow fall.

Leah Maier
Washington Elementary
Missoula

THE MAGIC OF SILVER GLENT

The trees shiver and bend
As if suddenly humble,
The grass weaves
Bending in and out.
My steps are deliberate
My arms swing back and forth
The gate creaks
In loud protest.

Like stepping intc another world
Smells of sweat, holdy hay and manure rise.
I step lightly and quickly trying not to stir
More dust in the air,
And yet reach that other door.
The latch turns hard,
Suddenly releasing
Against my stiff red fingers.

On the other side
The darkness of four walls
Surrounds me.
Blindly I stretch out for a small switch
Left of the door and
Lights blare into every corner.

The sound of whistling air...
I reach out for a bridle
Stiff and brittle
Gleaming with a dull luster.
I walk over to the tattered stall
And find him,
Gentle with the inner spirit of fire.
His nostrils flare and his eyes widen
As I put the silver between his teeth.

I lead him to another door,
Each hoof lifted high,
Lands gentle and careful
As though afraid
Of shattering the still air around us.

I climb on his strong back,
His skin is warm under my hand,
His muscles move
Under my legs in perfect rhythm
As he starts cantering on my low command.

We travel across bare fields
Through pastures of brown grass,
Where deer with their young
Had been.

We reach the barn again.
I close the door loudly behind us.
The smell of sweat is stronger now
As I hang the stiff bridle
On its rusty nail.

I then turn to face him,
Gently touching his warm neck.
I turn again and find
The switch by the door.
The latch turns easier now
And I walk out into the cold air.

April Stallcup
Fort Benton High School

DUSTY'S SMOOTH BARE BACK

I am on Dusty's smooth bare back
cantering swiftly across the field.
I can feel her muscles work
as she jumps the spring
her mane whipping in my face.

She gallops like a tornado
slows to a walk in the alfalfa
near the corral gate.
Laughing I throw my arm around her neck
as we walk together to the barn.

I curry the dust & weeds
out of her beautiful bay coat.
I brush her until she glistens
like frost on the silver maple.
She thrusts her face toward me
& kisses my cheek gently.
I give her the sugar lump & whisper
See ya tomorrow, K.

Janet Streifel
Paris Gibson Junior High School
Great Falls

The horse is a volcano of steam
Running free as a thousand insects.
The mane flowing softly like a covering
of fresh snow.
The pounding of its hoofs on the grassy
prairie is the sound of birds
flapping their wings.
The horse is strength and power
as the wind blowing across a
desert plain.
The horse is a friend on a frosty
bitter night.

Margaret
Opheim High School

IN A PASTURE BY THE RIVER ON A CLOUDY NIGHT

It is dark,
there are no stars or moon,
the ghosty shadows of cottonwood
hang overhead.
Snow on the ground,
sage brush peeks through
here and there.
Below, a small creek, ice covered,
under the ice the water is alive.
Our light searches
the undergrowth.
Two sparks of light
paralyzed with fear, appear.
Shots ring, it sounds like a war.
The lights disappear,
the smell of crisp powder.
And the light searches on.

Greg Russell
Dawson County High School
Glendive

The drop of rain falling,
falling, it hits
the ground. The bass goes low.
The violin screeches
in terror. Night creeps up,
jumps and lands in total
surprise. You run for life,
the rain hits your face
like a cactus in anger.
The end of the sound
of pattering feet warms
your departure from this earth.
The crack of death
pierces your ears. When
it stops you're on cotton
reaching for stars.

Tony
Skyline Elementary
Great Falls

DREAM

Winter is all around.
It's gray and white and it is getting me down.
It's cold and it's getting colder.
It's gray and white winter all around.
Old and I'm getting older.
Lying here when everything is going by.
My teeth chattering into the night.
There is a fire in the corner slowly dying away.
It feels like everything is coming down on me.
I feel like I am slowly sinking into the mattress.

Mike Galpin
Butte Junior High School

I stood atop a grassy hill
Looking out across the prairie,
The heads of the amber wheat bowed low.
A breath of wind blew little puffs of dust
from the plowed strips.
The China Wall rose against the clear sky,
Its craggy mountains capped with snow.
A chicken hawk soared above my head
An unwary rabbit sat calmly munching.
Suddenly it dived, disappearing from sight.
It appeared again, its prey clutched tightly.
I turned to see a small band of antelope
grazing in an open field.
They were suddenly spooked and were off in
a flash,
Bounding away effortlessly,
And all was quiet as I stood atop a grassy hill.

Carmen Montgomery
Hawthorne Elementary
Missoula

SPRING

Spring is in the air,
birds are flying North
and though trees are bare
now, they're putting forth
leaves. The fields are green.
Sun is getting higher.
Monday, Mr. Dean
put out the furnace fire.
Birds are building nests
and in the swamp are peepers.
Men discard their vests,
eggs are getting cheaper.

Mary
Kircher School
Custer County

A LOVELY DAY

The wind softly blew
the waves in the river
as a dove whispered to its love.
I was swinging
when I saw a swan
swimming with her
little one behind her.
A flock of birds
were flying above
a deer slipping
among the bushes.

Theresa Olver
Dickinson Elementary
Missoula

as he moves his hand
up and down
the feathers of the rattle
he made
go round and round
but never have an end
the bells at the legs
make a sound like
the drums
of the men
who make
the sound like a
bird who soars in
the wind

Amos Many Hides
Browning Junior High School

CHUTE

Resin invading the leather
pressed hard by shaking hand
salty taste of string
as I tie my stiff glove tight.
Fingers glued together
squeaking my hand
into the suitcase rigging.
The withers bunch the eyes lock
arm cocked
free hand back.
Nothing but outside.

Randy Hakes
Ronan High School

Silence is all around when the rodeo is over.
The losers come to the place which might
have made their end.
The wind blowing in their faces thinking
how nice it would have been to win.
Famous I could have been and saw the last
of these things--the losers say.
They hear the wind blow.
They see the dust fly.
They say
Why should I worry I could never quit this life.

Carrie Connelly
Browning Junior High School

small poems

How long does a poem need to be? Depends. Once in a while a line or two will do it. But not just any lines. Small poems have a special power. They are different from good beginnings to longer poems. They sound whole, loaded with energy: coal compressed into diamonds. There is nothing small or easy about the feelings they hold. These poets speak quickly and know when to be silent.

This morning I feel like
touching something
that's not there.

Rhonda Flake
Sunset School
Greenough

PICTURES

I'm drawing
I've got the pictures
in my mind
of somebody
I like.

Renee Allen
Fort Benton Junior High School

Out in Roundup the stars are all bunched together.

Cindy
Garfield Elementary
Billings

If I were a piano I would be elation-elation-elation.

Reuben Bear Tusk
Pryor Elementary

If my flower in
my backyard wasn't so blue
I would cut it down.

Matt Lowery
Lewis & Clark Elementary
Missoula

Dad I want
A nice quiet
Voice
I want one
Dad

Nichole Neibauer
Whittier Elementary
Bozeman

Because it is being noisy
And I do not know who to blame it on.

Danny
Garfield Elementary
Billings

BURYING MY NAME

Sue
Uses her
Shovel
And Nickname

Susan
Whittier Elementary
Bozeman

THE MEAT BOY

Meat boy was fat, no legs,
no arms, no eyes or nose, he
was so nice that he liked me. Me? I said,
he said, Yes, you.

Judy Pratt
Kircher School
Custer County

Outside is dark and rainy.
I feel like closing my eyes
and putting my head down.

Jan Snell
Pretty Eagle School

THE POEM

The poem
is like taking a journey.
But not leaving where you are.
Only your mind decides to leave.

M. Twomey
Butte Junior High School

A DREAM

A dream is night it is an old
man walking down your little
hand then when you awake
the dream is gone.

Paulette Harrison
Longfellow Elementary
Bozeman

BLACK

Black is like a cloud of darkness,
it creeps through the night
like a glider of darkness.

Allan
Kircher School
Custer County

I was worried about my little sister
because she was dead.

Janice
Kinsey School
Custer County

PLACE OF FANTASY

I find myself in a glass palace.
I hear a voice calling from behind
a spire.
A walking candle appears.
It astonishes me.
The candle calls to me,
come, come and light me.
The lighted candle takes a
different form.
It is an ugly troll.
I try to run.
I am filled with fear.
I feel myself running.
I am fleeing through a glass forest.
A doorway appears.
It is in the middle of a mirror.
I open it. I see a tree
dripping blood from
a wound in its trunk.
I run to the tree
I touch it
It says to me
Peel my bark off
Put me out of my
misery.
I do as it requests.
The tree disappears.
I leave and go
home to meet
the world of reality.

David R.
Opheim High School

EYES IN THE DARK

I see large, clear crystals which
are perfect and infinite.
They get farther away and are covered
by purple clouds of cold wetness.
The purple clouds turn red with
blood and fire.
My hands clench. I look at them.
They are stretched and I see through
my skin.
I turn liquid and flow through
glass tubes.
I flow like a river. I trickle
like a stream.
I fall and run into a black
forest. I'm scared and breathless.
I splash into a sea of green
frothy emeralds and drown
softly into my mind.

Becky Parsons
West Junior High School
Great Falls

The breath of tomorrow was heavy upon us
The moon was bowing away to the brilliant sun
The morning was wet with a warm mist
And the wind was playing tag with the clouds.

I walked along the vast ocean sands
And I pretended to be a great explorer
Searching to fulfill a perpetual dream
The dream to which there is no answer.

I drifted all day in and out of reality
I discovered what being alone really was
It wasn't a bad thing, but a thing of wonder
A time to find myself.

As the moon rose again in the sky
I walked again this time to find friendship
Because being alone is something to marvel
for a time
But without companionship all mankind would be lost.

Donette Ebbut
Central Elementary
Missoula

People's faces
were flying through
the sky. I saw my friend's face
and as she went by she yelled
"Come on" in an echoing sound.
I stood there and yelled "Where?"
to everyone who flew by
but there was no answer.
Suddenly it was no longer faces
that flew by but animals
and I was confused
so I just stood there gawking
and then I heard a noise,
"You must come too."
I realized I also
was going through the sky.
I think it was the end of the world.

Jeannie Senecol
Dixon Alternative School

Walking along the ocean, I hear the clams talking about their pearls. Running along, leaving footprints in the water, I open the door to the Devil. I let go of a rope and fall all the way down into a pile of snow. I stand up, dripping with orange juice, slipping on milk, and tripping over my shoelace. I fall on my nose, but break my back. My fingers are tied in knots as I bite a bee. My heart beats an egg into a singing bird as he flies away into the light. The sun comes up, singes the clouds and melts the water.

Bridgette Ann Bradshaw
Locate Elementary
Custer County

My shoes dream about
banging into walls

and the walls dream about
stopping in front of me
SO I CAN'T GO!

Me, I dream about monsters

and the monsters dream
about coats

and the coat's dreams
are about me putting
it on and his dreaming
about coming in frozen

and the ice and snow
dream about melting

Sammie Weber
Cold Springs Elementary
Missoula

DREAM HORSE

(A mistranslation: After *Caballo De Los Suenos,* a poem in Spanish by Pablo Neruda)

Unnecessary. Watching the mirror
like a great movie, big and perilous.
Arranged in my heart all captured in
hell establishing clammering sad tales.
I drift in uneasy sleep and old
absorbing ideas, conversing in the nest
of the tailors--hearing voices within
the frightening cold. People singing
throughout the land.
Deep hazy lines run the length of the sky
with the magical colored carpets
of the rainbow--with the horses
getting wild in my dream.
I no more think of the stillness
of the ground, the removal of the spade
until all is still. The dream ends
in a bedlam of confusion. The tremendous
set off by lasting persistence,
this jubilant festivity
that claims my dreams.

Cindy Langowski
Central Elementary
Missoula

THE ANIMAL'S CLUBHOUSE

Two beavers cut trees. A woodpecker drilled holes with his beak. A badger dug a hole. The bear dropped the log into the hole. A porcupine climbed the log and used his quills as nails. Chipmunks laid leaves on the roof. The porcupine bit deep into a pine. The oppossum caught sap in his pocket and spread the sap over the leaves. Squirrels pushed mud into the cracks between the logs.

As I left, I was as proud as a mother.

Richard Doak
S– Y School
Custer County

THE READER OF THE LOST DOOR

The night is like eyes in the dark.
The night is like a dog waiting in the doorway.
The night is a ball of fire.

The night is a panther screaming without a tongue.
The night is like a hand without a body.
The night is a pile of bones in the backyard.

The night is a lightning star.
The night is like spider blood on the table.
The night is a crack in the glacier.

Group Poem
Sunset School
Greenough

As the people got out of their graves
the wind began to howl.
The people were dancing in the moonlight
to the music of Pink Floyd.
God was at the party as a special guest.
He was doing the boogie with Patricia Hearst.
The Devil was waltzing with Mary.
And as they danced the world was still.
There was peace all over
because God stopped time
to have a party for my birthday.

Paul Russette
Box Elder High School

The following poems were written by students at the Crow Agency Public School during a visit by poet Jane Bailey. They are taken from a published anthology, BETWEEN THE HIGH MOUNTAINS AND THE RAINBOWS (copyright by Crow Agency Public School, Hardin School District 17-H, Big Horn County, Montana), reprinted with permission.

I charm my friend to sleep
and never come back
I will put hot water in a big bowl
and put him in there
and boil him and get all his power
so he doesn't make people into frogs
and put his power on my body.

Michelle Moccasin

Long ago the horses were painted all colors.
Long ago there were tepees in circles
like a round fire.
Long ago there were Indians that fought
the white man.
The Indians were painted white and yellow.
Long ago the buffalo ran off the cliffs
and died.
Long ago the Indians lived in tepees
and they had made the tepees.
Today we live in houses other people made,
the government made.
Today we drink out of glasses
that are clean.
Long ago we drank with our hands
from the Big Horn River.

Rosanna Bravo

BILINGUAL POEMS

Original poem in English

If I was Old Man Coyote
I would make two clans
and I would name one of them Sore Hands
because they always bead
and always work with their hands
and I would name another one Old Lodge
because some people always have
old old things and never give them away.

Translation to Crow

Baaleetdák Isáahkawuattee biilák
Ashammaléaxiia dúupdiawaawimma
Hawáteem dáashe Ishchiwaalakkéessaa
Iisheewée ishtúua iiwaahilikaáuk baannashtakaáiluk
Hawáte kúk Ashkalashía
Iisheewée bilaxpáake baakulaák shíakaasak kéessaailuk

Literal translation of the Crow

If I were Old Man Coyote
I would make two clans.
One would be named Hands-not-Idle,
I say this because they are always working with their hands,
always beading,
The other would be After-Long-Time Lodge,
I say this because they keep things, and after a long time they
still don't give them away.

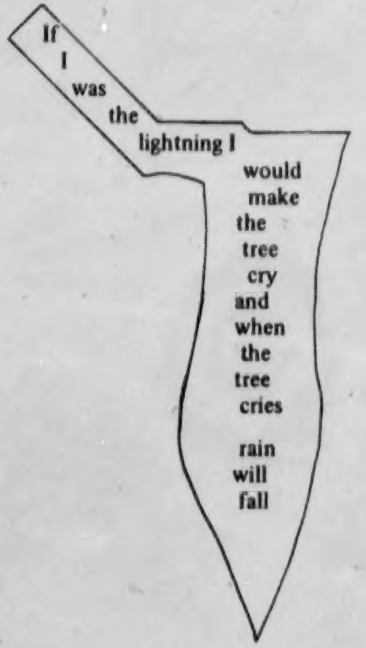
Carma Dawes

I would let my teacher sing a song
and I will dance with Thelma.
If my teacher doesn't sing I will say
please sing a song. Thelma
wants to dance. Will you sing,
me and Thelma really want to dance
Thelma is going to cry if you don't sing
hurry hurry Thelma is
almost crying.

Mary Pretty Weasel

My teacher is like the saying,
should a woman offer
a fishing tip to a man?

Arthur Stewart



Bruce Dawes

PRESIDENT FORD

President Ford is like an alligator.
Always snapping at something.
Signing papers by biting them.
Leaving nothing but his teeth marks
and the shreds of the paper.

Mike Kenney

The heart is like an elephant and a waterfall
It drinks water and it flows back down
It drinks water, it flows back down
Where it goes you'll never know
cause it drinks, flows back down
It drinks and flows back down
You'll never know where it goes.

Greg Dawes

I'M PLAYING HEARTBEAT

YOU CAN HAVE HER

Maybe
the note
really did mean
something
No
it musta been
a joke
but they don't
have to rub it
in
or maybe
I'll
dig up the dead
miner
next time
or maybe I'll
smash the lights
of heaven
Joe Cool
you can have her.

Peter Lindbergh
Sunset School
Greenough

SPINET

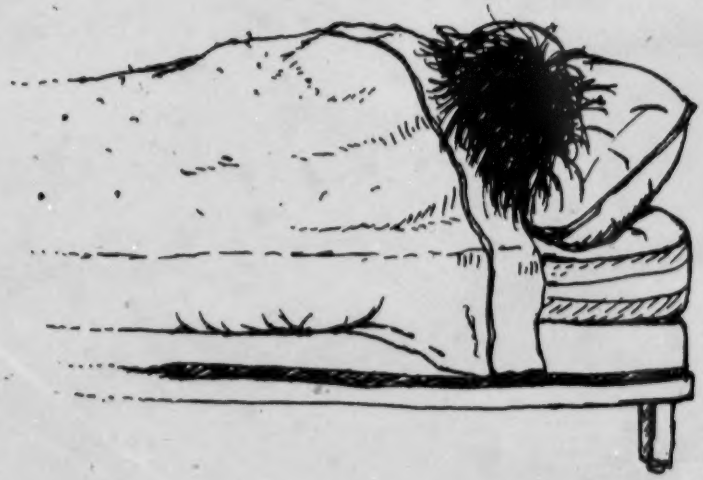
I'm playing the piano
I'm playing Heartbeat
Am I going to hit
the wrong key?

I'm playing the song of Peter
which is silent all the way
very long is the song
of Peter.

Rhonda Flake
Sunset School
Greenough

The first time I
wake up
my eyelids are 100 pound
bags of dried snails
and I'm not awake yet.
There are chocolate covered
ants crawling on my eyes
and I'm a machine
Someone turns me on
and the reel of tape spins frantically
and slow music plays soft
and the sound vibrations
in the air
are brushing my hair
like the wind.
Bells ring and
cymbals crash!
Dynamite powder explodes
and the snails are gone.
Two big brown circles peer through
open eyelids are boring holes
in the ceiling
I'm awake and I'm not a machine
I'm alive and energy surges
and I'm sixteen
and fire flies
and the morning
is beautiful.

Charlie Gilson
Ronan High School



Screaming silence fills the room
my head throbs
sleep retreats out my left
ear lobe
Rainbows swirl before my eyes
Blackness drips slowly
like
Thick molasses syrup
over my head
Television pictures closing in a
dot
erases all consciousness
falling without pain
I fly envelopes to Chicago
I compare sunshine
over sapphires
to yesterday's birthday cakes
without candles
At last
the cold floor pushes through
my drowsy haze

Mary Jane Piatt
Corvallis High School

I REMEMBER WHEN

I remember when my cousin, Laura was adopted
and the time she almost died.
I remember when I used to go to my friend's
house and we'd eat peanut butter and
dance on the table.
I remember when I taught my classmates
how to make a Joshua's Ladder instead
of having reading.
I remember the time when there was
a student-father paper drive and I
couldn't go because I didn't have a dad.
I remember the hurt and anger I felt
when my mother didn't let me be her
flower-girl.
I remember the time my step-brother
and I fell asleep watching Horror, Inc.
I remember the Christmas I got
Dorothy May, my baton, ate a huge
dinner and my sister gave me
a bloody nose.

Sharon Kelly
Willard Elementary
Missoula

Chair digging into my back.
Cold desk tickling my arms.
Sweaty palms against slippery
pencil.
My glasses pinching the side
of my nose.
My shirt looking like a
kaleidoscope.
Hay on my pants from
feeding the horse this
morning.
Musty, hot classroom.
Tired, smiling but thoughtful
teacher.
I smell the heat and frustration
in the classroom.

Elisabeth Lackschewitz
Prescott Elementary
Missoula

When the scent of pine came
tears came to my eyes. As I
walk down the path to where they
were putting her grave
I remembered her sweet tooth,
the way she used to cherish
chocolate, the way her tender
fingers would hold that chocolate.
In that old house down
in the valley so far away,
so green
how she would make me hide
behind the mirror when anyone
would come there!
How she would make me stay
hidden until they were gone.
Then she would take me over
to her favorite chair under
the big lamp and tell me a story
about the rain.

Melanie Beavers
Jefferson Elementary
Missoula

SLEEP

I wasn't born,
but I was alive down deep inside.
We were on our way to a city
that was far away.
We were to stop and rest, but
no time or money.
We got past the site where we were
to stop, when I was awakened from my womb sleep.
It was old mother earth turning over
in her bed as she rumbled and growled
in her forever sleep.
She was nice to us for she didn't swallow us
when she opened her mouth.

Marie Davis
Butte Junior High School

BEARER

Here is my letter,
so promised.
It was lost;
maybe on the shelf
the river sweated
this morning,
and in time.

With rainswept years
and clouded days
my tears grow dry
like drying
the wind.
Those years passed
trembling hands;
now calm; filled
with blood like night.

The weight fades
from day.
A deepened dusk,
it rests inside
as I rest
behind glazed eye.

Grant McGuire
Bozeman Senior High School

I DO SOMETHING BY MYSELF IN THE NIGHT

Sometimes when
everybody is asleep
I go to the kitchen.
When I am hungry
I always eat some cookies
and sometimes I get
some ice and a glass
and put the ice in a cup
then I put some
water in and when
I am going to bed
our baby is crying so I
pretend that I am asleep.
When our baby went
back to sleep I went
back in the kitchen
and when I can't
sleep I stay awake
till it is school time.

Lori Left Hand
Garfield Elementary
Billings

Do you remember?
When we used Mom's silver dishes
We broke the lip of a pitcher
and hid it in the chimney
When Mom's bus came around the curve
we all pretended nothing happened
But she knew
Mothers always seem to know

Kristin Miller
Paxson Elementary
Missoula

Once there was a boy and he was mean. He always stole me. Once I was in my Mom's car and he grabbed me. My Mom tried to take me away from him but she couldn't.

Heidi Ann Pucci
Garfield Elementary
Billings

Remember that first kiss of your life.
Remember the look on her face when you were finished.
Remember the sweet taste on your lips.
Remember who she was.
Remember how weird it felt.
Remember the other girls running after you and wanting a kiss.
Remember how you ran from them.
Remember when she came back for another kiss.
Remember giving it to her.
Remember?

Steve Denning
Franklin Elementary
Missoula

LETTER TO STEWART FROM MAY

Dear James: I'm stuck for thoughts. Don't
know whether to laugh or cry. I'll be
graduating soon. Nineteen days to go and
a step higher. The big door out there
scares me. Mom says to believe in God.
God says to see a mirror. Art is sun.
It helps clear my head and give me a touch
of confidence. I don't think I want
to stay and live with your folks. Their
minds are computered different. It's good
I hide my fears. My slides came in.
Maybe I'll get a scholarship, maybe not.
At least I'll graduate. But that door
is getting heavier to peep through.
Wouldn't it be neat to cease to exist
without death. I'm coming to your
graduation. Have you got your suit yet?
I miss you. The steps seem to be
in reverse. Love, Doughnut.

Donna Bott
Columbia Falls High School

MOMMY, MOM, MOTHER AND I

I am three
I ask each morning what day it is
Mommy says
a different thing each day
It doesn't form a pattern
I think and think then ask
what is this?
I am nineteen
I have a letter from Dad
Mom is not well
I feel bad
I go to the dorm and call Mom
on the payphone
and she sounds sad
I am thirty
Mother is a memory.

Jane Somppi
Paris Gibson Junior High School
Great Falls

We tried to walk to town one day.
We lived on a farm about five miles
out at Gennsville, in a five room shanty
where it was very cold
in the winter.

We got to the city limits
and got tired of walking, so
we tried to thumb a ride.
It didn't work, we are
still sitting here.

Wesley
Kircher School
Custer County

I am tired of fighting bulldozer winds
that threaten to blow me away.
I am tired of men judging me
as if I were canned goods.
I am tired of skin and bones cattle
shivering on the snow-covered flats.
I am tired of driving rattletraps
pieced together with baling wire.
I am tired of the epidemic of despair
that plagues this country.
I am tired of battling drought, inflation,
snow, low cattle prices, and hopelessness.
I am tired of never ending days
stretching into forever.

Randy Hakes
Ronan High School

My dreams are cold and lonely.
Though I stand still while the
wind blows strong against my bare
body. Leaves are falling all around
me. Like birds diving from the tall trees.
My vision is trying to show me
where to go. But shall I go?

Laurie
Dixon Alternative School

TRY

I ask you now
you turn away
I implore you
you laugh
I try to be a friend
you try to be indifferent
I try to be there
you make me invisible.

I try to forget you
you've forgotten
I try to phone you
you hang up
I know you're far away
you don't know where I am
I keep your picture
you never ask for mine.

When I'm back I don't try
you suddenly remember
I don't listen for the phone
you call me
I'm not trying to be there
you ask for my picture
Now I try to be visible
Now you try to see me.

Robert Nomat Jr.
Butte Junior High School

I can't write for him,
someone just pushed a sludge in my heart.
It was a person I knew,
I had faith in him.

I can't write for him,
he hurt me,
my heart longs
I wish there was an excuse.

I can't write for him,
my trust is broken,
I feel he is a fake,
all hope is lost.

I can't write for him,
my writing is too weird for him,
the understanding can't communicate.
Nothing communicates.

Veri
Dawson County High School
Glendive

No feeling?
Distraught.
Extravagant excuses.
Destroying the image of your
fascinating imagination.
Obviously
it's there, you use it.
Simple?
You lead me to believe
that your extremely fantastic creativity
is ruling over your whole being.
Writer, write for me.
Please?

Valerie
Corvallis High School

HOW TO MAKE A BED

Throw the pillows on the floor
or against the wall
depending on your mood.
Then throw the sheets up to the head
and remove all visible wrinkles.
To do this you must move
from one side to the other
patting
and smoothing.
Next comes the blankets;
do the same as with the sheets
only this time you may
flop down in the middle
not caring about the wrinkles
that will be born.
Stare at the ceiling
thinking what to say to your parents
about the broken glass
or anything else
that hangs over you.
Think of raindrops sliding off a daisy.
Get up
and straighten
all the wrinkles.
Pull up the spread.
Pick up the pillows
and place them on the bed.
Finally pull the spread up
covering the pillows.
This should not last longer than an hour.

Cindy Skogen
Ronan High School

Outside the snow is falling like blue beads
and the water is running in the bathtub.
I feel lazy and I want to read,
and I hear my mother making lunch downstairs.
And my dog is sleeping on the rug by my bed.

Kara Billis
Whittier Elementary
Bozeman

I HATE ONIONS & OTHER POEMS

ONIONS

I hate onions
more than tomatoes or shrimp pizza
or any other thing I may be made to eat.
I hate onions,
the scent of them burns my contacts,
they feel weird,
they're hard to raise in a garden.
May I make myself clear,
I hate onions.
One night long ago
I had a dream.
In my dream I was driving,
driving toward a dusty sunset
(I like to drive)
I almost like to drive as much as
I hate onions.
(God, I hate onions!),
there was a man along the road.
My mother always told me,
don't give anyone a ride,
but I thought I'd better give him a ride.
He was the President.
He got in and I saw
in his right hand was a bundle of onions.
I hate onions.
But he was the President, so I let it go.
We were driving, it was dark now.
He told me to hold the onions.
I hate onions, but there I was,
onions in hand.
My car didn't steer well,
(my real car doesn't steer well)
we were going around a turn
steering wheel in one hand,
onions in the other.
I couldn't keep in my lane,
another car came around the corner and
we went off the edge.
The President, the onions, and I.
We were sailing through the air--
it was all the onions' fault.
I woke up.
I suppose we crashed far down the cliff.
I suppose we were killed.
I woke up in jail.
I have killed the President.
They are feeding me onion soup.

NWB
Whitehall High School

I have eaten
the red wheel barrows
that were in
the ice box

glazed with
breakfast

forgive me
they were delicious
beside the white
chicken

Brenda LaFromboise
West Junior High School
Great Falls

LETTER FROM THE BABY SITTER

Dear Bob: Robbie kissed a girl today.
She hit him in the mouth with an eraser.
He told his teacher he fell. Michael
wants a jockey strap for baseball.
He doesn't know what it is. Neither
does Mark. David is bringing home
bad papers. His teacher says he's bright
but daydreams. Yesterday Mark drowned
the ants in his ant farm. Today he started
collecting bugs, LIVE ONES. I've decided
not to clean his room anymore. The boys
had macaroni and cheese for dinner.
I hope they sleep well. David can't sleep
when it's light. He made a tent over
his head. I hope he doesn't get stuck
if he has to go. I just washed the sheets.
Robbie wants to go out for dinner tomorrow.
Last time he stuck his hot dog in David's
root beer. Mark piled his french fries
in the ash tray and set fire to them. Michael
got sick on his onion rings and threw up on
my Teen Burger. I hope you come home soon,
I think the cat's dead. Love, Susan.

Susan Ranes
Columbia Falls High School

Good Morning, I'm your friendly bearded secretary.
I'd like to tell you a story about Black
Beard's Ghost who got his toast roasted in
a fire at the North Pole. Now I'd like to introduce
you to my host who is eating his
applespit with a chick and a stick in his
mitt. Mrs. Lind's pet flute playing frog, is not
a hog or a dog wearing clogs, he's really a cold
toad dead in bed under your mustache. You
beep driving a jeep with a whole glob of watches
for wheels.

Group Poem, First Grade
Jefferson Elementary
Missoula

THE TABLE

The table is a horizon where a thousand dishes have gathered.
The table is a mass of wood taken from a tree who was sad to be taken.
The table is a broad platform whose scars have never faded.
The table is a hard faced man who never smiles.

Cindy Skogen
Ronan High School

THE DOORS INTO WONDER

Glasses: window panes peering into the mind
of the human body.
A Ring: a piece of metal holding your finger together.
A Barrette: a silver finger holding onto the last
strands of life.
A Filling: a boulder holding the entrance
to the death of your tooth.
The Cord on a Window Shade: a rope waiting idly
for someone to choke.
An Eyelid: a cover for the fear and anxiety
of your face.
Dice: rolling numbers going forward and backward,
not knowing where to stop.

Lyz Clearman
Havre Junior High School

The river is like a cooked tongue.
A crooked tongue is like a streak of lightning.
A streak of lightning is like fire in a war.
War is like wrestling.
Wrestling is like tangled weeds.
Tangled weeds is like the confusion of growing up.
Growing up is like building a skyscraper..
A skyscraper is like a snake.
A snake is like a weathered rope.
A weathered rope is like my hair in the morning.

Group poem by the entire S-H School
Custer County

FOR NANCY

do you wish you could fly? and not
die when you were flying
all her life nancy does. she wish
she could fly by the cool stream waters
and fly over the countryside and
see all the beautiful flowers
and see pretty birds and all kinds of
colors and then rest and think and fly back home.
and be free.

Lydia Hogan
Pretty Eagle School

CRASH

I first saw Crash when he walked into my living room
His hair was bright red with streaks of yellow.
His face was constructed of broken glass and ashes.
He was enormous and clattered when he walked.
He smelled of burning houses and exploding cars.

He walked through my house destroying it,
putting his ugly hands through my walls.
The ceiling of the kitchen fell down.
The grand piano collapsed.

When he was gone, I was shocked to inspect
the damage. I sat all afternoon staring
at the gigantic hole in the bedroom wall
where Crash had made his exit.

Nancy Tipton
Billings Senior High School

FIVE WAYS TO LOOK AT A PERSON'S FACE

1. My person has eyes that look bright and colorful; like tiny lakes with trees all around them curling both up and down.
2. My person's nose looks very much like a bridge between these two lakes, going down and growing into a small mountain with two caves in it.
3. My person's mouth, when open, shooting out words like a geyser. When the mouth is shut, the tongue seems to float restlessly.
4. My person's hair is like blades of grass, bent down by wind and rain.
5. My person has eyebrows that are like dark clouds overlooking the whole face, keeping watch, guarding it.

Cindy Meidinger
Kinsey School
Custer County

MY DREAM

I had a dream about a man
that could pull off his ears
and nose and hands. He was
like a toy after many years
of play. He would take off
his nose and people would
laugh. He would walk in with
no hands and people would cry.
No one knew when he took off
his ears. He had long hair.
Sometimes he would walk and
fall apart. He was a funny
sad man.

Cheryl Gatz
Outlook High School

MY DARLING AND I

My darling and I always bicker over
who rides the train, stacks the pots,
peels the potatoes, gathers the acorns,
folds the sheets, cleans the pool,
plays the fiddle, and, who turns on
the air conditioner, but, when we
get done we are funny, distant, brainy,
weary and slow about bringing the
jars in, when we are doing this we keep
nudging each other about quitting.

Debi Rice
Kare Paddock
Meadow Hill Elementary
Missoula

THE DAM

I wish I was a dam.

I would have pipes running
through me.
I would be the biggest dam
of all.
You could ride boats on
my water.
You could hear the waves
hit me.
There would be a fast elevator
to the bottom to see my pipes.
I make electric.

I make electric for your house.
I make water for your
sink, tub, shower.
Many people work in me.

If you go to the bottom
you can feed the fish by putting
bread in the water.

When you are going up
the hill, there will be a visitor center.
When you go inside there
will be pictures of me.
There will be a big window.
If you look down you will
see me.

Dan Hopley
Fort Smith Elementary

THE RAINBOW IN THE PUDDLE

When the cars
were made the
rainbow said
to the cars
you need some
gas and so
the rainbow
made the cars
a gas tank
but it took
the rainbow
two weeks
and while
he was
finishing the
gas tanks it
rained and
when the gas tanks
were put into
the cars the gas
fell out and into
the water and
the water looked
at himself in
the mirror and
saw a rainbow.

Mar Kae Perritt
Russell Elementary
Missoula

PURPLE

Purple is a color that no one thinks about.
Her mother is white and her dad, blue.
She lives in a crayon, waiting to be drawn.
It's a shy bashful color and doesn't like to talk.
She has feelings like the rest of us.
Her bad friend is pink.
And she's very jealous of pink
cause pink's so pretty and purple isn't.

Bob
Rattlesnake Elementary
Missoula

PINK

Pink is in my pocket.
It moves around to be free
but its noises are unbearable.
Pink is the main part of supper.
It steams with much flavor
to increase my appetite.
Pink is at the doorway to greet me at home.
It's in the water fountain to give everyone water.
Pink is in my mother's eye after she finds out
I've been up to no good.
Pink is the color my dog's feeling
after he's lost a fight.
Pink is the taste of a good vanilla ice cream cone.
Pink is the color of my trees
after the sun's been shining on them all day.
Pink is a good rythmn in a Christmas song.
Pink is the way I feel when I'm having fun.

Noreen Red Cherries
Labre High School
Ashland

Laughter is like the wind.
The wind is like a journey lost in another world.
They both come like streaming waters.

Mike Iron
Labre High School
Ashland

TONY

A guy with a leather jacket,
Slouching to look neat,
He swaggers as he walks,
Using slang words when he talks.

The street where he lives
is garbage lined.
His apartment a place where
feelings are measured,
And a place where the happy
times are treasured.

Below in the street a
chopper awaits.
He uses it little.
Gas is expensive and
so,
He walks a bit.

But,
Below that leather jacket
And beneath that grimey
T-shirt,
There is a heart and
feelings
Which he keeps bottled
up inside.

His feelings he thinks
are dumb.
And his heart is just
a machine,
So when someone he
loves slips away,
He has nothing left
to hurt but pride.

Robin Charlton
Lowell Elementary
Missoula

A CAT

All I want is a cat.
It does not have to fly
or swim.
All it has to do
is purr and be nice.

Derik Pope
Irving Elementary
Bozeman

PEANUTS

Peanuts remind me of army tanks
camouflaged with leaves ready to bomb
enemy tanks with the bombs inside.
Shooting its way out of the
enemy traps, bombing, shooting,
destroying, leaving a path of
demolished buildings, cars,
anything that gets in its way. It's
like a tiger hiding ready to strike
any moment, killing its foe and barely
making it through swamps and having
many adventures. That's what
peanuts remind me of.

Greg Powers
Whittier Elementary
Missoula

PAPER

A piece of paper isn't what it looks like.
It's really a picture of a mountain covered with snow.
A piece of paper is a television screen with no picture.
A piece of paper is an imagination waiting to be filled in.

Susan Cooledge
Lake High School
Medicine Lake

A blank piece of paper is like
-looking into a dead man's eyes.
-the birth of a new beginning.
-an old man trying to talk to his
20 year old nephew.
-my mind trying to make ideas
for this poem.

Gracie Soto
Billings Senior High School

I think a poem should be
as soft as the wind
and never told to anyone
as long as you live.

Leslie Tollefron
Skyline Elementary
Great Falls

I hate paper, boy I hate paper.
It gets you in trouble.
If you don't have it, you get in trouble
for not writing on it.
If you've got it, you get in trouble
for writing wrong on it.

Doug DuMont
Dixon Alternative School

My poems are thoughts.
That's all they are,
no more, no less. That's it.
They're not like the books.
They're not like yours.
They're mine.
I say, "I wrote them."

Myffie Dolezal
Ronan High School

THOUGHTS ON TEACHING & LEARNING WRITING

By David Long

Helping another person learn poetry-writing involves two kinds of information. Because a poem is a *thing*, it requires shaping. To move from the moment when your imagination says: *hmmm, that's kind of interesting, maybe there's a poem there. . .* to the moment you realize the poem you've made is as complete and satisfying as it's going to get, it is good to understand a few basics about the craft. It's good to know that poems come in *lines*, instead of sentences, that lines are used to form *stanzas*. It's good to remember that poets care how their poems sound--because, after all, poems are human speech, meant to be spoken outloud--so they make sure the lines aren't flat-sounding or awkward. They create patterns in the language using various tricks: rhythms, words that rhyme (or, more often, partly rhyme), or simply words or phrases that repeat and capture the ear's attention. Because poetry is precise language, there's no room for extra baggage, so you learn to keep *cutting back* to the strongest, cleanest lines. You learn that even the best poems usually need some tinkering with before they're done. You remember that the best way to make your experience come alive for someone else is to avoid boring generalities in favor of specific *images*--pictures in words--and that comparisons--*simile, metaphor*--are often a good way to nail down the special feeling of a thing. Sometimes the emotions and ideas that trigger the writing are so tangled and mysterious that they cause you to write a line that defies everyday logic. You learn to trust your imagination's hunches, and you go ahead and write, like a 4th grader in Bozeman: *The diamond is a drop of eagle's blood.* You learn about emotional accuracy. Most of all, you learn to recognize the sound of your own voice.

The important thing to keep in mind about craft, especially for beginning writers, is that it's only a tool, not the poem itself. It is meant to help out, to give some useful choices when you're stuck. Memorizing a bundle of literary terms won't help a bit if you don't feel the spirit behind them. In the classroom, I am flexible about craft. I try to get beginning writers excited about possibilities in their language. I'm always saying things like: *how would this poem work if you made it over with different kinds of lines. . . What if you threw this part out, would it change anything. . . Suppose. . .* Experimenting, pretending the words are clay. John Holbrook puts it this way: "The poets program is designed to help kids learn the fun of expression, to learn that it's fun to play with words and to get serious with words. We're trying to say that writing a good poem can be like hitting a home run."

The other sort of information you use is less cut and dried, but probably more vital. It involves creating an environment in which students feel comfortable

enough to let their imaginations drift outside the normal boundaries of the classroom, and then to commit some of those thoughts to paper. The feeling has to be right, full of mutual encouragement. Without it, the poems won't even get started. So much depends on attitude. If a classroom teacher thinks: *I don't really understand all this poetry but I guess we'll get through it somehow. . .* students will reflect the reluctance and the experience will be painful, or simply boring, for everyone. Or if a teacher approaches poetry only as GREAT LITERATURE, it may end up seeming distant, just another school subject with right and wrong answers, not something alive and available. Talking about the best writing of other times is fine as long as you remember that those poems were once only moments old and the poets paused over them with uncertainty and excitement. As a teaching poet I am most concerned with *this week's literature.*

While the idea behind Poets & Writers in the Schools isn't to magically turn everyone into a poet or writer, I think almost everyone can do a good piece of writing once in a while. In the schools, what a good piece of writing looks like is going to be different every time. Maybe it's kind of ragged or unfinished, but it has an honest feel to it. It cuts through the old same ways of seeing and talking and gets down to the place where each of us is one of a kind. Somehow it *tells what's important* at that moment. It convinces us. So the poem turns out to be a valid way of dealing with experience. It shows that our real and imaginary lives are full of moments worth remembering and exploring. And possibly no time in a person's life is as full of emotional discovery and change as school age. The poems in this anthology show some of this incredible energy captured in words. Take Rhonda Flake's beautiful love poem, SPINET, or the uncertainty of Donna Bott's graduation-eve poem, LETTER TO STEWART FROM MAY, or the bittersweet feel of these lines from Rosanna Bravo's poem about life on the reservation: *Today we drink out of glasses / that are clean. / Long ago we drank with our hands / from the Big Horn River.* There is Cindy's amazing one-line poem about life on the south-side of Billings: *Out in Roundup the stars are all bunched together.* There's the loneliness of Lori Left Hand's poem I DO SOMETHING BY MYSELF IN THE NIGHT, the humor of Doug Davis, the exuberance of Charlie Gelson's poem about waking up, which ends: *I'm alive and energy surges / and I'm sixteen / and fire flies / and the morning / is beautiful.*

So how do you prepare for writing? The best way is to come unafraid and open-minded, and the best way to achieve that is through exposure to lots of good recent writing. In the grade schools, I've found that students love to hear and talk about poems done by kids their own age. It's a great way to prime the pump. The same is true for older writers, but they also need to see and think about work by contemporary adult poets. I've run into many students who are literally starved for writing they can relate to, poems about problems and events they recognize as *real*--things that count. It's sad to watch a young writer fumbling around trying to copy the abstract speech of 19th century poetry. Some exciting poems often come from people who were convinced they didn't have any talent for it and who thought "you couldn't write about things like that."

To help get past the writer's worst enemy--the blank sheet of paper--we've included a list of creative writing resources we have either used and enjoyed ourselves or had recommended to us. It is partly adapted from the *1976 Directory of American Fiction Writers* (published by Poets & Writers, Inc., 201 West 54th St., NYC, NY 10019). These publications are loaded with good poetry-starting suggestions, thoughts on teaching and learning the art of writing, and many include hefty selections of student prose and poems. Finally, of course, the only real way to learn to write is to jump in and start writing.

RESOURCES FOR CREATIVE WRITING TEACHERS

AMERICAN POETRY REVIEW'S POETS-IN-THE-SCHOOLS SUPPLEMENT. Each issue of APR, a 48-page tabloid of poetry, interviews, and criticism, contains several pages of essays by poets on teaching poetry in elementary and high schools. APR is published six times a year. Subscription rates are one year: $5, two years: $9. Single copies are $1. Write to The American Poetry Review, Dept. S, 401 Broad St., Philadelphia, PA 19147.

ANGWAMAS MINOSEWAG ANISHINABEG (Time of the Indian). A continuing magazine of writings by Indian children. Free, from Molly LaBerge, Minnesota Poets-in-the-Schools, COMPAS (Community Programs in the Arts and Sciences), 75 West 5th St., St. Paul, MN 55102.

THE ANT'S FOREFOOT publishes adult poetry by poet-teachers, accompanied by poems of young (12 and under) students they have been working with for at least a year. To contribute, send 10 poems by the student only. If accepted, you will be asked to contribute a comparable number of poems yourself. Send manuscripts to David Rosenberg, 29 St. Mark's Place, New York, NY 10003.

BEING WITH CHILDREN: A HIGH-SPIRITED ACCOUNT OF TEACHING WRITING, THEATER, AND VIDEOTAPE. By Phillip Lopate. Doubleday, 1975. $7.95 (hardcover).

BETWEEN THE HIGH MOUNTAINS AND THE RAINBOWS: Poems from Crow Agency Public School. Edited by Jane Bailey. Crow Agency Public School, Hardin School District 17-H, Big Horn County, MT.

DONUT IN A BOX. Poems from the Poets-in-the-Schools Program of the South Carolina Arts Commission. Edited by Dale Alan Bailes. South Carolina Arts Commission, 829 Richland St., Columbia, South Carolina, 29201.

A FEEL FOR WORDS: MAKING POETRY IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS. By Richard Fricks. A handbook for teachers and parents by Chattanooga's Poets-in-the-Schools, 1971-73. Tennessee Arts Commission, 222 Capital Hill Building, Nashville, TN 37219 $3.50 (paperback).

FOOTPRINTS ON WINDOWS. Santa Fe Public Schools, New Mexico Arts Council, Lew Wallace Building, State Capital, NM 87501.

HOMEMADE POEMS is an illustrated handbook by poet Daniel Lusk on imaginative techniques for teaching poetry-writing to children, adults, old people and the handicapped. $2.50 from Lame Johnny Press & Associates, Hermosa, SD 57744.

I AM AN UNKNOWN GREATNESS. Poems & notes from Montana's Poetry-in-the-Schools, 1974-75. Edited by David Long. The Montana Arts Council, 235 E. Pine, Missoula, MT 59801. Out of print.

I AM THE DARKER BROTHER. Edited by Arnold Adoff. Macmillan, 1968. $4.95 (hardcover), $1.95 (paperback). Black poetry anthology for children in grade 7 and older.

I DON'T NEED YOU, ROD MCKUEN, GOOD-BYE! 1973 Poetry-in-the-Schools Program. North Carolina Arts Council, Department of Cultural Resources, Raleigh, NC 27611.

THE INDIVIDUAL VOICE is a student poetry anthology available free from the Indiana Arts Commission, 155 E. Market St., Suite 614, Indianapolis, IND 46204. 1973-74.

IN THE FOG I SHINE. Poetry from Tacoma Public Schools, 1974-75. PO Box 1357, Tacoma, WA 98401.

JOURNEYS. Edited by Richard Lewis. Simon and Schuster, 1969. Prose by children of the English-speaking world. $4.95.

MATH, WRITING, AND GAMES IN THE OPEN CLASSROOM. By Herbert Kohl. Vintage Books, 1973. Practical suggestions and techniques for teaching math and writing to children. Distributed by New York Review, 250 W. 57th St., NYC, NY 10019. $6.95 (hardcover), $2.45 (paperback).

MIRACLE FINGER. Salted Feathers No. 11. $2.95. A book of works by children ages 2 to 15 with notes by parent and teacher poets. Edited by Dick Bakken and Charlene Lowry. c/o Dick Bakken, Thomas Jefferson College, Allendale, MI 49401.

MY ROOTS BE COMING BACK. Edited by Nancy Lewis. A selection of art and written material from children in hospitals. New York: Touchstone Center for Children, 1973. $1. Address: 141 E. 88th St., NYC, NY 10028.

MY SHADOW IS THE BLACK SUN THAT I WALK IN. An anthology of student poetry from the Yakima and Ellensberg School Districts. Poet-in-Residence Program, 1974-75. Edited by Ed Harkness. Published by ESD 105, Yakima, WA.

MY SISTER LOOKS LIKE A PEAR: AWAKENING THE POETRY IN YOUNG PEOPLE. By Doug Anderson. Hart Publishing, 1974. $7.50 (hardcover), $2.95 (paperback).

THE NEW KIDS. A magazine by and for children. Individual subscriptions are $7 for 8 issues. Write to Kids Magazine, 747 Third Ave., NYC, NY 10017.

POET TO TEACHER TO STUDENT. Edited by Richard Snyder, 1971. A talk to teachers and a supplement to building an audience for poetry. The Ashland Poetry Press, Ashland College, Ashland, OH 44805. $1. (paperback).

A POETRY RITUAL FOR GRAMMAR SCHOOLS, by Robert McGovern, is a manual for teachers and teacher-training. It proposes the routine use of adult poetry to begin the children's day. A small anthology of likely poems is appended. $1, from The Ashland Poetry Press, Ashland College, Ashland, OH 44805. (paperback).

A ROAD NOT TAKEN: AN APPROACH TO TEACHING POETRY. By David Verble. Classroom experiences of Nashville's Poet-in-the-Schools, 1971-72. $2. (paperback). Write to Tennessee Arts Commission, 222 Capitol Hill Building, Nashville, TN 37219.

ROSE, WHERE DID YOU GET THAT RED? By Kenneth Koch. Teaching great poetry to children. Random House, 1973. $7.95 (hardcover), $2.45 (paperback).

SNOW IS CHIPPED DIAMONDS, poetry from Wyoming's Poets-in-the-Schools Program, 1971-72. Charles Levendosky, Poetry Programs of Wyoming, PO Box 3033, Casper, WYO 82601.

SOMEBODY TURNED ON A TAP IN THESE KIDS. Edited by Nancy Larrick. A textbook anthology of writing by Florence Howe, June Jordan, Richard Lewis, Eve Merriam, students, and others. Delcorte Press, 1971. $5.95 (hardcover), $2.45 (paperback).

STICKER, TREES, AND WET LEAVES. . . An anthology of student poetry from Project TAP (Total Arts Program). John Todd, editor. South Carolina Arts Commission, Arts in Education Division, 829 Richland Street, Columbia, SC 29201.

STONE SOUP. William Rubel, editor. Poetry, prose and art from children worldwide. $4.95 for 3 issues/year. $2 for single copies. Write Stone Soup, Box 83, Santa Cruz, CA 95063.

TAPROOTS. A study in cultural exploration, edited by Bennie Lee Sinclair. 1975. The South Carolina Arts Commision, 829 Richland Street, Columbia, SC 29201.

THE TEACHER PAPER. "The only magazine to print only work by teachers." A magazine published 5 times a year, written by and for teachers. $8 per year. $1.75 per copy. The Teacher Paper, 2221 N.E. 23 St., Portland, OR 97212.

TEACHERS & WRITERS COLLABORATIVE PUBLICATIONS. Highly recommended. Includes: A DAY DREAM I HAD AT NIGHT by Roger Landrum. $3. "A collection or oral literature from children who were not learning to read well or write competently or feel a sense of satisfaction in school." FIVE TALES OF ADVENTURE $3. A classroom reader featuring short novels by elementary school children. THE WHOLE WORD CATALOGUE edited by Rosellen Brown, Marvin Hoffman, Martin Kushner, Phillip Lopate, and Sheila Murphy. A practical collection of assignments for stimulating student writing. Contains an annotated bibliography. $3. IMAGINARY WORLDS by Richard Murphy. Topics for sustained student writing including inventing utopias, different schools. . . $3. SPICY MEATBALL. An annual literary magazine of P.S. 75, NYC. $1. THE TEACHERS & WRITERS COLLABORATIVE NEWSLETTER. Contains diary excerpts and articles by professional writers and other artists who are working in classrooms on a regular basis with teachers and students. Also includes student work and outside contributions. Subscriptions are $5 for 3 issues, $2 for single issues. All materials may be ordered from TEACHERS & WRITERS COLLABORATIVE, 186 West 4th Street, NYC, NY 10014.

WHAT'S INSIDE YOU IT SHINES OUT OF YOU. By Marc Kaminsky. Horizon Press, 1974. A young poet's description of poetry writing with a group of older people, plus an anthology of their work. Write to Horizon Press, 156 Fifth Ave., NYC, NY 10010.

WISHES, LIES, AND DREAMS: TEACHING CHILDREN TO WRITE POETRY. By Kenneth Koch and the students of P.S. 61 in New York City. Chelsea Hous Publishers, distributed by Random House. $7.95 (hardcover), $1.95 (paperback).

WRITERS AS TEACHERS/TEACHERS AS WRITERS. Edited by Jonathan Baumbach. Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970. Essays by professional writers such as Denise Levertov and Grace Paley about their work in college writing programs. $2.45 (paperback).

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